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COUNTRY : USSR

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT: "Intelligence - to the Level
of Modern Tasks", by Lieutenant-General of
Aviation P. Dankevich

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Intelligence - to the Level of Modern Tasks¹

by

Lieutenant-General of Aviation P. Dankevich

Marshal of the Soviet Union V. Chuykov's article is extremely timely and possesses great significance for a further increase in the combat readiness of our troops. The author's suggestions, both organizational and technical, are directed at the further improvement of the forces and means of military intelligence, and they deserve thorough study and rapid practical implementation.

The role of intelligence is understood by everyone; it is one of the basic types of combat and operational support of troops. However, the lag in the development of the forces and means of intelligence, in contrast to the uninterrupted improvement of combat weapons, gives rise to apprehension and anxiety.

The imperfection in the organizational structure of the organs of military intelligence, as well as the weakness of their technical equipment, is correctly noted in the article.

Let us briefly consider the problems of aerial reconnaissance touched on in the article.

Under the conditions of the high maneuverability of weapons of mass destruction and of troops in operational and tactical depth, and the dynamics of modern combat operations, aerial reconnaissance is one of the basic types of intelligence. It is capable of observing large areas and obtaining the most reliable and documentarily supported intelligence data on important enemy objectives in a short period of time.

1. Special Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought", First Issue, 1960.

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In connection with the increased scope of tasks which are performed by aerial reconnaissance, and the difficulty of their fulfillment, we consider that Marshal of the Soviet Union V. Chuykov is absolutely correct in suggesting that an air army (VA) of a front have one regiment of operational and one regiment of tactical aerial reconnaissance. Furthermore, it is desirable that two squadrons in an operational reconnaissance regiment composed of three squadrons be equipped for night photo-reconnaissance and infrared photography, and in a regiment composed of two squadrons, that one of the squadrons be so equipped. Units of such an organization will be able to detect more reliably all enemy operations carried out during the hours of darkness.

For the immediate determination of the coordinates of mobile targets detected by aerial reconnaissance crews, the RYM system and direction-finding equipment must be widely used. It is therefore desirable to have 6 to 8 aircraft equipped with this system in the composition of an ORAP (separate reconnaissance aviation regiment) of operational reconnaissance.

For the support of combat operations of the missiles of a front, the chief of front artillery must have aerial reconnaissance means at his disposal, for example, an artillery fire adjusting reconnaissance aviation regiment (2 to 3 air squadrons).

There should be a single photogrammetric center in the composition of a regiment for the processing and rectification of aerial photos and the determination from these photos of target coordinates. Such a center will be able to unite the photo specialists of the separate artillery fire-adjusting reconnaissance aviation regiment (otdelnyy korrekktirovochno-razvedyvatelnyy aviatsionnyy polk - OKRAP), the artillery photogrammetric batteries, and also the specially trained officers from the topographic service of the military district. The photogrammetric center is the final authority for the processing of photo documents and the issuance of target coordinates to the command.

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Non-organic (neshtatnyy) reconnaissance aviation squadrons of air army air divisions will, as a rule, conduct aerial reconnaissance and re-reconnaissance in support of the combat operations of their own large units (soyedineniye).

The time is quite ripe to pose the question of the transfer of the means of aerial radiotechnical reconnaissance from the composition of an air army to a radiotechnical regiment of special designation (osoboye naznachenkiye - OSNAZ), subordinate to a front, in order to achieve centralization of control and clarity of purpose in the organization and conduct of such reconnaissance.

Attention and support are deserving for the author's suggestion for the inclusion in the composition of a combined-arms and tank army of an organic regiment of tactical aerial reconnaissance consisting of 2 to 3 squadrons. In our view, a regiment should have one artillery fire-adjusting reconnaissance squadron armed with multi-place aircraft and helicopters for re-reconnaissance and fire adjustment for army missile artillery.

The availability to ground troop armies of their own organic means of aerial reconnaissance will increase the initiative of the commander and the staff of an army in the organization and conduct of combat with the enemy's nuclear weapons and will reduce the time needed for assignment of tasks and for the receipt of reconnaissance data from the crews of reconnaissance aircraft. In order to ensure the timely receipt of reconnaissance data from airborne aircraft (helicopters) and the control of crews in the air, the large units of ground troops must have radio stations (receiving and transmitting) with the necessary anti-jamming features and range of operation (up to 200 km).

In order to fulfil the entire scope of tasks assigned to reconnaissance aviation, the latter must not only be greater numerically in its composition, but it must also be correspondingly better equipped technically. 50X1-HUM

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A reduction in the combat strength of the aviation of a front, in our view, must not lead to a decrease in the number of reconnaissance aircraft until they are gradually replaced by pilotless means of aerial reconnaissance.

Modern technical outfitting of the means of aerial reconnaissance is most inadequate and obviously lags behind the development of combat weapons. The reconnaissance aircraft presently in use will not be able to provide the full scope of reconnaissance data to our missile and aviation units.


For the successful conduct of aerial reconnaissance, special reconnaissance aircraft are needed, capable of conducting observation from various altitudes (from 100 meters up to 25 to 30 km) and having a great range of speeds (up to 2000 to 2500 km/hour) and sufficient range and duration of flight. It is perfectly obvious that such aircraft must have improved flight and ground technical equipment, enabling them to conduct reconnaissance and photography by day and night from any altitude, to conduct television and radiotechnical reconnaissance, and to rapidly transmit data on the enemy with the use of automatic coding and secure transmission apparatus.

A no-less-important element of strengthening the organs of military intelligence is the training and retention at all echelons of intelligence officer cadres and their acquisition of experience in the organization and conduct of reconnaissance, especially of the weapons of nuclear attack. It is also very important to take stock in peacetime of targets detected on the territory of the probable enemies.

Concerning the urgent necessity for the creation in our armed forces of more sophisticated means of reconnaissance, a number of articles have been published in the military press and many proposals have been put forth at military-scientific conferences; however, the accomplishment of this most important task is moving very slowly.

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The urgent execution of measures directed at the improvement of the organizational structure of military intelligence as a whole, including aerial reconnaissance, and the marked improvement of technical equipment of the means of reconnaissance, undoubtedly will permit the elimination of the lag in the capabilities of intelligence in contrast to the rapid development of combat weapons, and will fully support the combat operations of our troops.

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